



FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



FEED THE FUTURE EGYPT RURAL AGRIBUSINESS STRENGTHENING PROJECT

FY20 Q1 QUARTERLY REPORT

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USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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Contract No.: 72026318C00004

DISCLAIMER

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ACRONYMS

AEC	Agriculture Export Council
ATS	Agriculture Technical Schools
CDA	Community Development Association
CNE	Community Nutrition Educator
CSAM	Crop System Assessment Methodology
FEC	Food Export Council
FY	Fiscal year
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
HACCP	Hazard analysis and critical control points
HEIA	Horticultural Export Improvement Association
IR	Intermediate Result
MALR	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MOE	Ministry of Education and Technical Education
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
NFSA	National Food Safety Authority
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
PO	Producer organization
SBC	Social and behavior change
TOT	Training of trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	U.S. Government

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This fiscal year 2020 (FY20) quarter I (QI) Quarterly Report covers the period from October 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019. It is the fourth quarterly report submitted to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Egypt under Contract No. 72026318C00004.

The Feed the Future Egypt Rural Agribusiness Strengthening Project is a USAID-funded project that aims to develop the horticulture industry's ability to better respond to domestic and international buyer demand and to improve the industry's competitiveness by applying a market-driven, systems-strengthening approach. Abt Associates is the prime implementing partner, and partners with Egyptian firm CID Consulting, U.S. small businesses JE Austin Associates and 20/20 DC, and the Global Cold Chain Alliance.

PROJECT CONTEXT

This project is applying a market-driven, systems-strengthening approach to build farmers' and processors' capacities to respond to demand from domestic and international buyers and fully meet their market requirements. The project directly contributes to USAID/Egypt's Development Objective "a more competitive and inclusive Egyptian economy through growth in selected sectors," and to the sub-purpose "increased agriculture-related incomes of smallholder farmers."

The project is strengthening Egypt's horticulture market system and improving the capacity of smallholder farmers and processors, producer organizations (POs), and horticultural institutions, through agricultural knowledge transfer and trainings to familiarize farmers with higher-value production of horticulture crops. Improvements to the value chain will raise employment and incomes for vulnerable Egyptians and enhance food security throughout the country. Ultimately, the project will create a more competitive and inclusive Egyptian economy through horticulture sector growth, with special focus on securing employment and increasing agriculture-related incomes of smallholder farmers in Upper Egypt and the Delta.

Project activities aim to achieve four intermediate results:

- i. **Strengthened sustainable domestic and international market linkages.** The project will identify domestic buyers and consult with them on challenges and requirements involved in meeting market demand for safe, high-quality, produce delivered on time and in sufficient quantities. It will build long-term national and international commercial relationships and strengthen sustainable linkages between suppliers and buyers.
- ii. **Improved post-harvest handling and storage.** To meet high-end market demand, the project will offer best practices to reduce post-harvest losses through appropriate cold chain facilities and transportation, effective packaging, and better harvesting practices.
- iii. **Increased productivity of small farmers and food processors.** The project will build and strengthen the capacity of producer organizations and private sector extension services to disseminate information, provide technical assistance to smallholder farmers and processors, increase access to finance, and collect crops more effectively; and will help FIs develop appropriate tools and risk-reducing models.
- iv. **Improved nutritional status of women and children.** The project will improve the nutritional status of women and children through SBC interventions that reinforce nutrition-sensitive activities. Targeted messages for each segment, delivered through multiple channels, will increase awareness and promote nutrition throughout the food production pathway.

QUARTER I ACHIEVEMENTS

In FY20 Q1, the Feed the Future Egypt Rural Agribusiness Strengthening project achieved numerous milestones, including:

- Engaged 4,934 individuals—including smallholder farmers, PO members, university graduates, women, and packhouse laborers—in training and other activities. Of these participants, 30% were youth (ages 15–29) and 20% were women. During FY19, the project reached 15,625 individuals, for a total of 20,559 individuals over the life of the project.
- Conducted 972 trainings on production, post-harvest handling, marketing, food safety, nutrition and gender with a total number of days of 1,251.
- Facilitated the signing of eight forward contracts between POs and exporters. Of special note, Alhekma Community Development Association signed and fulfilled a contract with Spice Kingdom to supply 35 tons of basil. During FY19, the project signed nine contracts, for a total of seventeen contract.
- Facilitated the signing of three input supplier contract between the Quesna for Agricultural Development Company and Al-Shanawy Agricultural Cooperative in Beni-Suef, and two others between the Bridge Trade Company and two associations in Assuit: the Production Cooperative in Sahel Selem district, and the Association for Local and Agricultural Community Development in Al-Badary district.
- Developed and launched eight agri-loan products to serve 61 small farmers (15 women and 46 men), with a total amount of EGP 1,598,000 (\$100,000).
- Signed nine new MOUs, including:
 - Identified and signed MOUs with five POs in Minya (3), Qena (1) and Aswan (1) to provide technical assistance to smallholder farmers growing grapes, mangoes and medical herbs.
 - Signed MOUs with two companies: Techno Green Company to help small farmers access higher quality inputs and irrigation systems, and ADRATIC Egypt Company to help small growers, access new irrigation technologies.
 - Signed an MOU with the Agriculture Export Council (AEC) to qualify packhouses and small farm laborers to meet local and international food safety requirements. The project will provide technical support to pack houses to comply with food safety standards, while AEC will compile requests of member packhouses for training and assist in setting up a demonstration model of an accredited pack house.
 - Signed an MOU with the National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) to build the capacity of NFSA inspectors.
- Launched activities, including a launch event and two stakeholder meetings, in the Delta region.
- Identified strawberry and artichoke as new focus value chains in the Delta region.
- Conducted a Crop System Assessment Methodology (CSAM) for basil in Aswan and Assuit, tomatoes in Qena, and green beans in Sohag and Beni Suef. Identified that about 40-50% is lost in the postharvest stage for green beans and 40% is lost for tomatoes.
- Introduced new low-cost technology to increase water use efficiency for both surface and drip irrigation systems through water management consultants.
- Organized linkage visits for 19 mango farmers from Aswan to Ismailia to observe best practices in implementing good agricultural practices (GAP).

I. ACTIVITY PROGRESS

DELTA FOUNDATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In FY20 Q1, the project began work in the Delta region and completed important foundational activities key to building relationships and engaging stakeholders to ensure project success. The project received clearance to begin work in seven governorates in the Delta region (Ismailia, Dakahlia, Gharbia, Sharkia, Monoufia, Beheira and Alexandria) and greater Cairo.

Stakeholder Meetings

The foundation of the project's approach is to engage with local stakeholders and government officials throughout greater Cairo and its 14 target governorates in Upper Egypt and the Delta. In FY20 Q1, the project held seven preliminary meetings with Undersecretaries of the Ministry of Agriculture in each governorate in the Delta region (Ismailia, Dakahlia, Gharbia, Sharkia, Monoufia, Beheira and Alexandria) to introduce the project, identify clusters of smallholder farmers, and identify significant crops. As a result, the project's Gharbia team developed a road map and framework for the project's work in the Delta region.

On December 9, the Gharbia team introduced the project to the Agriculture Directorates in Menofia, in response to an invitation received by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture in the governorate. On December 26, the project conducted a one-day meeting to introduce the project's objectives, activities, components, and expected results to different stakeholders in Gharbia governorate and to discuss opportunities for cooperation during the life of the project. One hundred twenty-four participants (5 of whom were women) participated in the two meetings from Gharbia and Menofia governorates, including representatives from the Agriculture Directorates from each governorate; university heads, deans, and staff members; cooperatives and agriculture associations; nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and smallholder farmers. A summary of participants at each meeting appears in Table I.



Meeting with the Agriculture Directorate in Menofia governorate, December 9.

Table I. Stakeholder Meeting Participants

Stakeholder Meeting	Number of Participants	Number of Male Participants	Number of Female Participants
Menofia	40	38	2
Gharbia	84	81	3
Total	124	119	5



Stakeholder meeting in Gharbia governorate, December 16

The meetings highlighted that by using a buyer-led approach, the project will first assess market needs from the perspective of specific buyers, then help farmers meet the production and post-harvest handling standards that buyers require. Each meeting included a presentation of the project's focus value chains and highlighted the importance of improving nutritional status of participants in the Delta region. During the Gharbia meeting, the project's team members also presented an overview of the project's grants, training, and agribusiness internship programs. During open discussions, participants asked clarifying questions about the project's scope or approach and opportunities for partnership.

Project Field Visits

In FY20 Q1, the project organized three field visits to Beni Suef, Qena and Luxor governorates to attend parts of the project's field training activities, visit demonstration farms, learn more about progress to date in the contract agreements with POs that the project has facilitated, hear success stories of university and agriculture technical school (ATS) graduates, and assess the progress of the partnership between the project and PepsiCo.

Representatives from USAID accompanied the project team including Deputy Assistant Administrator Mr. Andrew Plitt, Director of Middle East Office Ms. Jessica Zaman, USAID/Egypt Mission Director Ms. Sherry Carlin, Deputy Director of the Economic Growth and Governance Office Mr. Michael A. Trueblood, Program Manager of Agriculture and Agribusiness Dr. Mohamed Abo El Wafa.

October – Luxor and Qena

On October 20-21, the project team and USAID officials travelled to Qena and Luxor to visit a nursery association, pack house, and field trainings. On the first day, USAID officials—including two Environment Officers from USAID/Egypt and the Middle East Bureau, as well as the USAID/Egypt Program Manager, Agriculture & Agribusiness—attended a field training in Luxor on quality characteristics of tomato seedlings at Al Sheety Nursery Association for Agriculture Communities Development and then toured the nursery. At Esna Pack House, the USAID representatives attended a post-harvest training for dates and toured the facility. Project staff also received training on environmental compliance with respect to agriculture activities, particularly recycling, climate change, and water-use efficiency. During the second day, the USAID/Egypt Program Manager for Agriculture and Agribusiness attended a field training on good agricultural practices for fennel farmers at Khozam Association and Be'r Anbar Association in Qus District, Qena. The delegation also attended a training on financial education for farmers at Al Qalaa Association, and then observed a post-harvest training for dates at Al Ghad Al Moshreq Association in Garagous Village.



USAID delegation observing a post-harvest training for dates at Esna Pack House, Luxor, October 21.

November – Beni Suef

On November 19, project staff and USAID representatives visited Beni Suef governorate to assess the progress of the partnership between the project and PepsiCo. The USAID/Egypt delegation included Deputy Director of the Economic Growth and Governance Office Mr. Michael A. Trueblood; Program Support and Public Outreach Specialist Mr. Charles Copeland; and Program Manager of Agriculture and Agribusiness Dr. Mohamed Abo El Wafa. The team met with the head of the Dallas Agricultural Association, who presented a brief introduction on their areas of cooperation with the project, including technical assistance and the facilitation of business linkages between the

association and Quesna Company. As a result of the partnership, the project facilitated talks with the association to add a second demonstration farm. Demonstration farms allow other farmers to observe best practices firsthand, learn about quality and quantity differences in produce, and then implement what they have learned on their own farms. The delegation attended trainings for potato farmers on post-harvest handling and safe pesticide use, as well as parts of a demonstration farm training on GAP for potatoes. Participants learned how to sort seedlings prior to germination and to exclude those that are rotten or too small.



Project and USAID team attending a potato post-harvest training in Dallas, Beni Suef, November 19

December – Qena

On December 9, a USAID delegation and project staff visited Qena governorate to meet with the students and graduates of Khozam Agricultural Technical School, attend parts of the projects' training to fennel farmers, and meet with the board members of Khozam Association for Community Development. The USAID delegation included Deputy Assistant Administrator Mr. Andrew Plitt, Director of Middle East Office Ms. Jessica Zaman, USAID/Egypt Mission Director Ms. Sherry Carlin, USAID/Egypt Program Director Ms. Nancy Fischer, USAID/Egypt Program Support and Public Outreach Specialist Mr. Charles Copeland, USAID/Egypt Development Outreach and Communications Specialist Ms. Ashley Thoet, USAID/Egypt Interpreter/Translator/ Communications Assistant Ms. Abeer Zidan, and USAID/Egypt Program Manager, Agriculture and Agribusiness Dr. Mohamed Abo El Wafa.

The team met with a number of representatives from Khozam Agricultural Technical School, including directors, teachers, graduates and current students. Mr. Ahmed Kamal, Expert Teacher and Head of Training Unit and Career Development Center at the school presented accomplishments achieved through the support of USAID projects, followed by four graduates who received training and internship opportunities through USAID projects sharing their stories.



Graduate Walid Hendawy telling his story to the attendees at Khozam village in Qena, December 9.



Mr. Andrew Plitt, Deputy Assistant Administrator attending a field training for fennel farmers in Qena, December 9.

The delegation also attended a combined GAP and water management field training for fennel farmers in Khozam Association for Community Development, then attended parts of a GAP and buyer food safety requirements awareness session for farmers. Finally, the delegation discussed with Khozam Association's board members their current cooperation with the project and a contract agreement that the project helped facilitate between the Association and Giza Seeds Company to serve 150 smallholder farmers of fennel.

Project Launch Event

On November 14, the project launched activities in seven governorates of the Delta region: Ismailia, Dakahlia, Gharbia, Sharkia, Monoufia, Beheira, and Alexandria. Forty participants (four women and 36 men) attended the event, including senior officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR), the Chamber of Food Industries, and USAID. The launch highlighted the project's buyer-led approach, which assesses market needs from the perspective of specific buyers then helps farmers meet the production and post-harvest handling standards that those buyers require. The project team presented on its target value chains and highlighted the importance of improving the nutritional status of project participants. Team members also presented an overview of the project's grants, training, and agribusiness internship programs. During open discussions, participants asked clarifying questions about the project's scope, approach, opportunities for partnership, and grants.



Participants at the project's launch in the Delta Region, Alexandria, November 14.

The 5th Synergy Meeting

On November 24-25, the project hosted the 5th Synergy Meeting attended by eleven USAID/Egypt projects working in agriculture, technical education and research; the Head of Agriculture at the Ministry of Education and Technical Education; private sector representatives; 12 project staff members; and USAID representatives. The two-day meeting facilitated networking and explored partnerships and synergy opportunities in coordination, collaboration, and communications for 28 participants (nine women and 19 men). The USAID team included Deputy Mission Director Rebecca Latorraca, Deputy Director of the Economic Growth and Governance Office Michael A. Trueblood, Program Support and Public Outreach Specialist Charles Copeland, Program Manager for Agriculture and Agribusiness Dr. Mohamed Abo El Wafa, Private Enterprise Officer Mustansir Barma, Financial Analyst Nancy El Fadly, and Senior Economic Counselor Dr. Rasha Abdel-Hakim. Dr. Mohamed Abo El Wafa presented the workshop's objectives, expected results, and schedule. To explore partnership and synergy opportunities, each project summarized its objectives, activities, and expected results on a flip chart. One representative of each project presented on the project's activities and answered questions, and the group explored means of cooperation through a note-hanging exercise. Topics covered included the importance of monitoring and evaluation, grant programs, and private sector engagement. Working groups explored these topics including successes, enhancement ideas, lessons learned, and challenges.



Working groups during the 5th Synergy Meeting Workshop, November 24-25.

IR 1: STRENGTHENED SUSTAINABLE DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MARKET LINKAGES

The project seeks to establish and strengthen linkages between smallholder farmers in Upper Egypt and the Delta with domestic and international buyers.

Sub-IR 1.1: Facilitate farm-to-market linkages between small farmers and buyers

Activity 1.1.1: Validate list of horticultural crops with buyers

In FY20 Q1, the project's marketing team analyzed and reviewed the development potential of targeted horticulture value chains in the Delta region, including nontraditional crops that can compete in both local and international markets. As part of this, the team also reviewed the poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, and gender dimensions of potential value chains. As a result of this analysis, the project identified strawberries and artichokes as value chains to focus on in the Delta, in addition to the 11 value chains identified in Upper Egypt in FY19 (onion, green beans, tomatoes, mangoes, date palm, potatoes, grapes, pomegranates, basil, mint, and fennel).

Activity 1.1.2: Hold project launch event to spur buyer interest

In November, the project's marketing team supported the project's Delta region launch event in Alexandria by inviting potential buyers to participate. The project promoted the selected value chains during the event, explored the buyer's expectation from producer organizations, and built initial market demand by interviewing stakeholders individually. In December, the marketing team participated in the Delta stakeholder meeting held in in Gharbia governorate to raise awareness of all concerned parties of the project's goals, activities, and plans for their areas with focus on the business, marketing, and access to finance component.

Activity 1.1.3: Conduct initial buyer selection

In FY20 Q1, the project's marketing team held meetings with several buyers to explore potential areas of partnership. With these diversified companies, the team presented the project's approach, goals, activities, and target groups, and identified buyers' products, markets, challenges, and current supply mechanisms. During this quarter, the team visited twenty-five companies. As a result, the project identified potential areas of mutual benefit, and updated its list of committed buyers who are interested in developing sustainable business linkages with POs that represent smallholder farmers in Egypt (See Annex D. Private Sector Engagement for more details).

Activity 1.1.4: Identify qualified suppliers and Activity 1.1.5: Establish linkages and sign MOUs

This quarter, the project identified and signed MOUs with five POs in Minya (3), Qena (1) and Aswan (1) for smallholder farmers to provide technical assistance along the value chains of grapes, mangoes and medical herbs (see Annex E. Producer Organizations a list of all partnerships with POs). The MOUs outline the type of technical assistance the project will provide, including in marketing, production and post-harvest services, institutional reform, training, capacity building, and nutrition for smallholder farmer members and their families. The MOUs specify that the associations will ensure proper implementation, follow-up, and commitment to the project's recommendations in marketing, production, and post-harvest practices. The five MOUs will lead to increases in small growers' incomes and enhanced the capacity of the associations to apply a market-driven approach to increase the associations' efficiencies.



Signing MOUs with three cooperatives in Minya.

During this quarter, the project facilitated the signing of an input supplier contract between the Quesna for Agricultural Development Company and Al-Shanawy Agricultural Cooperative in Beni-Suef. The partnership will provide high-quality inputs of potatoes and green beans, serving around 1,000 smallholder farmers in the region. In addition, the project facilitated the signing of contracts between the Bridge Trade Company and two associations in Assuit: the Production Cooperative in Sahel Selem district and the Association for Local and Agricultural Community Development in Al-Badary district. The partnership will provide high-quality agricultural inputs and technical assistance to support around 1,000 small growers during the 2020 pomegranate season.



Quesna Company signed contract with Al-Shanawy Agricultural Cooperative in Beni-Suef, November 5.



Eng. Alaa Mohamed, Chairman of Al Badary Association (left), and Eng. Aly Abdel Maged, Chairman of Production Cooperative (right), both signing contracts with the Bridge Trade Company Representative.



The project signed MOUs with two companies: Techno Green Company to help small farmers access high-quality inputs and irrigation systems, and ADRATIC Egypt Company to help small growers access new irrigation technology, particularly gated pipes. This technology will help small farmers decrease water consumption, decrease costs, and improve quality and productivity of their crops. To demonstrate the new technology, ADRATIC Egypt will fund 2 feddans as a demonstration farm in two governorates to help small growers see the efficiency of the technology on the cost and production level.



The project during Signing MOU with ADRATIC Egypt Company

Activity 1.1.6: Provide targeted technical assistance and material support to ensure commercial partnerships succeed

International Factoring (for Export)

In November, in coordination with GiZ and the Food Export Council (FEC), the project's marketing team hosted a one-day workshop titled "Supporting SME Agribusiness Exporters" about international factoring to introduce the factoring mechanism, types of factoring products, and export credit



Participants during Supporting SME Agribusiness Exporters in Cairo, November 3.

guarantee. The event brought together 84 exporters and service provider representatives to explore financial (banking and non-banking) services, logistics services such as shipping and cargo, and financial product types. In separate sessions, 49 exporters learned about international factoring, export guarantees, insurance services, and were introduced to the new financial techniques.

Beans business match

In November, the project hosted a one-day “Matchmaking for Green Beans” event, which brought together 38 exporters and green bean farmers from Beni Suef, Sohag, and Behira (four women and 34 men). The event aimed to create business linkages between producers and exporters of green beans and to support producers to meet quantity requirements, international standards, and other buyer requirements. The project team presented an overview of project activities, event objectives, the importance of adhering to food safety standards and measurements during cultivation, storage, and export, and GAP for green beans. The event included a discussion on contracting, pricing policies, the advantages and disadvantages of collaboration, obstacles facing green bean producers and exporters, and how to overcome those challenges. Participants split into small groups to discuss opportunities for future collaboration. The day resulted in many linkages, and two initial contracts were later signed between Americana and Raya Companies and Awlad Yahia Farmers Association in Sohag,



Collaboration meeting between farmers and exporters during the green beans business linkages event, November 17

Fourteen Producers Organizations at Food Africa Cairo Exhibition



The Project's session during the Food Africa Exhibition in Cairo, December 11

On December 11, the project and the FEC held a joint session titled “Technical Assistance to the Agro Processing Industry” during the 5th Food Africa Exhibition at the Egypt International Exhibition Center in Cairo. The session provided an overview of the project’s goal, activities, and expected results, with focus on strengthening the capacity of POs in production, post-harvest handling, marketing, and food safety standards to meet market demand and international standards for quality, quantity, and timely delivery. Fourteen POs from Upper Egypt attended the exhibition to network and gain wider access to the Egyptian mega-market and Africa’s booming agriculture industry, with support from the project team.

Contracts

During Y2Q1, the project's marketing team facilitated the signing of eight contracts (see Table 3) in five different governorates and five different value chains.

Table 3. Contracts Signed in FY20 Q1

No.	Company	Association	Crop	Government	Farmers	Feddens	Tons
1	Wadi Al Nile	Tanta Cooperative	Onions	Gharbia	-	-	150*
2	Giza seeds	Khozam CDA	Fennel	Qena	25	20	-
3	Giza seeds	Beer Anbar CDA	Fennel	Qena	100	150	-
4	Spice Kingdom	Beer Anbar CDA	Fennel	Qena	30	35	-
5	Agri -Tech	Tafnies CDA	Tomatoes	Luxor	50	50	500
6	Americana	Awlad Yehia CDA	Green beans	Sohag	35	30	102
7	Raya	Awlad Yehia CDA	Green beans	Sohag	10	11	31
8	Ego	Sahel Slim Productive Cooperative	Pomegranate Enzyme	Assiut			0.25

* As of December 31, 2019. Still ongoing.

Sub-IR 1.2: Strengthen agricultural producer organizations to meet buyer demand

Activity 1.2.1: Select key producer organizations

In December 2019, the project held two stakeholder meetings in Menofia and Gharbia governorates to identify key POs in the Delta region and introduce the project activities and objectives to the participants. The meetings included representatives from the Agriculture Directorates from each governorate; university heads, deans, and staff members; cooperatives and agriculture associations; nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and smallholder farmers.

Activity 1.2.2: Strengthen PO management and market linkages capabilities

With the project support, 14 POs from Upper Egypt attended the 5th Food Africa Exhibition in Cairo. The event was an excellent opportunity for the POS to attend such a high profile exhibition and presented a platform to network with the attendees and get a broader view about the Egyptian and African markets.

Additionally, the project performed a number of field visits to the partner financial institutions. The main objective of the visits was to provide technical assistance for those institutions in order to develop agri-loans to small farmers.

Activity 1.2.4: Build contracting models that work for buyers and suppliers

During this quarter, the project facilitated the signing of a forward contract between the Agricultural Development Association in Awlad Yahia and Nivex Company for Fresh Export regarding the supply of fresh grade one green beans. The project also supported the association by providing the required technical support to green beans farmers in order to comply with the company's quality standards. A total of 74 tons of green beans were successfully supplied to the company through the association.

Moreover, the association signed two contracts with RAYA and Americana regarding grade two beans to be used in the processing of frozen products. The two companies got in touch with the association during a business matchmaking event organized by the project. The association was able to supply 30 tons to RAYA and 100 tons to Americana thus far.

Activity 1.2.5: Institutionalize market-oriented capacity building within ATS

In FY20 Q1, the project conducted a basic food safety training program including introductions to good hygienic practices, good manufacturing practices, hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP), and GAP. A total of 24 university graduates from Beni Suef governorate participated in the training. The training was followed by an advanced food safety training program for 43 university graduates from the seven Upper Egypt governorates to enhance their knowledge for Global GAP, Internal Audit and British Retail Consortium (BRC) standards, paving the way to link the participants with market needs including farms, pack houses and processing companies to match domestic and international buyers' requirements. All training sessions included practical farm visits and training to link theoretical concepts with real-life applications and ensure training effectiveness.

In the remainder of FY20, the project will select new groups of university graduates in Upper Egypt and the Delta for basic and advanced food safety training programs. Additionally, the project will start food safety training programs for ATS graduates.

Sub-IR 1.3: Support producer organization suppliers in meeting certifications and standards

Activity 1.3.1: Develop food safety plans to support commercial partnerships

This quarter, the food safety team developed assessment criteria and started to visit shortlisted POs to identify their current food safety policies (if any), market needs, and their capability and willingness to adopt effective food safety plans to develop new marketing segments.

The team visited eleven POs from six governorates to support development of their food safety plans, including strength, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analyses, operations challenges, and action plans. POs were selected in cooperation with the project's marketing team to align feasibility of certification and business linkages creation possibilities. Another PO selection criterion was alignment with focus value chains, including pomegranate, grapes, herbs, green beans and potatoes. In Q2-Q4, the selected POs will receive technical assistance and on-the-job training and coaching visits to prepare them to meet buyers' requirements.

Activity 1.3.2: Conduct certification training

In Q1, the project trained 306 farmers on domestic or global certification requirements that buyers were demanding. This included 55 green bean farmers from a PO in Sohag whom the project helped link with a fresh crop exporter, and 63 smallholder strawberry farmers from Behira governorate who were trained on exporting requirements from Ministerial decree 670/2017 for horticulture crops, in cooperation with the MALR Directorate in Behira and AEC.

Through the project's partnership with PepsiCo, 188 smallholder potato producers from Dallas PO in Beni Suef were trained by the project's food safety team on domestic and international markets exposure and increasing adherence to food safety practices in cooperation with Bayer Crop Science division, one of PepsiCo's input suppliers. The training included requirements from Bay GAP, which enables farmers to comply with PepsiCo's requirements and become certified in the future.

In addition, the project trained 120 technical workers from pack houses and processing companies on food safety requirements—either domestic criteria developed by the National Food Safety Authority and AEC, or international standards including British Retail Consortium. Throughout, the project incorporated social and behavior change (SBC) concepts into food safety training sessions to better enable participants to adopt and

implement food safety requirements and criteria more effectively and deal with obstacles preventing behavior change.

Sub-IR 1.4: Strengthen industry application of international food safety standards

Activity 1.4.1: Support value chain actors to promote international food safety standards

In Q1, the project identified relevant value chain actors, including plant quarantine inspectors, MALR extension services providers, transportation and packaging service providers, and certification bodies. Through a trilateral cooperation model, the project worked with MALR and AEC to conduct an integrated training program that included Global GAP standards, as well as internal audit and effective inspection skills to build the capacity of plant quarantine inspectors who are responsible for regular inspection of farms planning to export horticultural products. The project trained 34 inspectors from MALR plant quarantine offices in Cairo, Ismailia and Alexandria on expanding their services—including through technical support and coaching—to the farms they visit.

In addition, in cooperation with MALR, the project trained 32 MALR extension services providers from Behira on food safety export requirements for strawberry. The training-of-trainers (TOT) sessions will enable the service providers to provide coaching services to smallholder farmers.

During the remainder of FY20, the project will work with other value chain actors to identify needs and develop training programs for, for example, transportation and packaging service providers and pesticides technicians.

Activity 1.4.4: Support implementation of the National Food Safety Authority Law

In Q1, the project discussed cooperation possibilities with the NFSA and identified technical assistance areas including workforce (inspector) capacity building, organizational technical assistance like inspection systems or risk assessment studies, and awareness workshops to enhance NFSA's capacity and outreach.

The project and the NFSA signed an MOU in Q1 to outline roles and responsibilities of each party and an action plan for implementation during Q2-Q4. The major activities include a capacity building program for NFSA's inspectors in regional offices, ports and airports for horticulture exporting procedures, and training curriculum for each competency level of the authority hierarchy enabling the inspectors to implement an effective inspection system and skills.

IR 2: IMPROVED POST-HARVEST HANDLING AND STORAGE

Sub-IR 2.1: Build the capacity of POs to improve small farmers' post-harvest handling practices

Activity 2.1.1: Support POs in addressing post-harvest challenges in commercial partnerships

In FY20 Q1, the production and post-harvest (PPH) team conducted additional field visits to different facilities in order to complete its evaluation and needs assessment of post-harvest challenges. Among the evaluated places was a cold chain facility in Wady Elssaid, Aswan in order to identify the challenges and the weak points along the value chain and its effect on the quality and shelf life of fresh produce.

The team also conducted a detailed Crop System Assessment Methodology (CSAM) for basil in Aswan and Assuit, for tomatoes in Qena, and for green beans in Sohag and Beni Suef. The assessments found that about 40-50% is lost in the postharvest stage for green beans and 40% is lost for tomatoes in Upper Egypt.



CSAM for Tomatoes in Qena

During this quarter, the project completed nine Modified Commodity System Assessment Methodology (MCSAM) studies for dates, mangoes, pomegranates, grapes, potatoes, onions, tomatoes, green beans and basil. The project will hold a workshop in Q2 to discuss the results and outcomes of all findings and to identify and validate doable, measurable and achievable strategies to minimize such losses.



CSAM for Green Beans in Beni Suef and Sohag

Activity 2.1.2: Strengthen POs' technical skills transfer for post-harvest operations

In Q1, the PPH team conducted a TOT on the best post-harvest handling practices for university graduates at South Valley University in Minya. The training activities also covered pack house managers, operators and laborers from the different value chains including green beans, tomatoes, onions and potatoes. A special training was also provided in the seven governorates of Upper Egypt on quality instrumentation tools and how to determine, judge and manage produce quality.

Sub-IR 2.2: Introduce innovative technologies to address cold chain gaps

Activity 2.2.1: Introduce an affordable and applicable innovative technology that helps maintain the quality and extends the shelf life of target value chains

This quarter, the project reached out to two leading companies in the area of insulated panels and refrigeration regarding one of the innovative ideas the project presented in FY19—the CoolBot technology. Both companies are planning to build several prototypes as a test, with the project providing the required technical assistance.

The project team also introduced all technical information related to the solar drying greenhouse (including JUA Technologies International's DehyTray) to the Center of Egyptian Family Development (CEFD) in Aswan. The center is interested in running it as a sample and offering it as a lease to families to dry tomatoes, dates and other produce. The project plans to provide all required assistance needed.

Finally, the project introduced a small-scale harvest machine for potato tubers that minimizes the losses significantly. The machine was modified by one of the farmers in Beni Suef after attending a post-harvest training for potatoes. The training emphasized how to minimize bruising, mechanical damage, and shattering during harvest by operating an easy-to-use machine instead of the traditional method of hand harvesting with a hoe. This machine is considered an effective low-cost solution, and could harvest one feddan in less than 90 minutes, in comparison to a minimum of six hours per feddan with the traditional method. The mechanical damage is expected to be cut by at least 75%, which means increase in the marketable tubers and more income to the farmers.

Activity 2.2.2: Issue challenge grants for cold chain and transport solutions

The grants program is working with potential grantees currently developing full applications in Upper Egypt (Aswan, Luxor, Assuit and Minia), where cold chain and transport solutions are part of the proposed activities.

Sub-IR 2.3: Strengthen packhouses, packaging and other post-harvest services

Activity 2.3.1: Strengthen existing packhouse services

During this quarter, the team conducted a series of field visits in Upper Egypt to introduce the concept of the Postharvest Training and Service Center as a sustainable solution for pack houses. The purpose is to create a simple, low-cost facility that provides TOT, local access to needed tools and supplies, and serves as the focal point for a number of postharvest outreach efforts with regards to the value chains of the project.

These centers will provide users with a complete package of postharvest technologies, training, supplies, services, and support activities. The project is planning to build six centers under its Grants Program for the first time in Egypt. The team is in contact with different parties to introduce the concept, including Um Habiba



South Valley University graduates during the TOT on best post-harvest handling practices checking postharvest quality measuring tools in Qena

Association, Aswan University and the Agricultural Service Center Association in Aswan and South Valley University in Qena.

Activity 2.3.2: Conduct Packhouse Expo

Discussions are ongoing with the Global Cold Chain Alliance for the expo to be held later in FY20.

IR 3: INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY FOR SMALL FARMERS AND FOOD PROCESSORS

Sub-IR 3.1: Build PO and private sector extension service capacity to provide technical assistance to small farmers and processors

Activity 3.1.1: Incentivize buyers to invest in building supplier productivity and market responsiveness

The USAID-PepsiCo pilot potato model in Dallas village, Beni Suef is an innovative private sector engagement model that aims to achieve the project's objective of increasing incomes of small farmers in a sustainable manner. PepsiCo, through its subsidiary Chipsy Egypt, is the leading potato processor in the country. Chipsy Egypt mobilized Bayer Crop Sciences to supply inputs for two demonstration plots in the pilot that yielded significant results. Bayer, a well-known German multinational company, also provided the BayGAP training for 160 small farmers in cooperation with the project. The company also participated in a field day, where a lead farmer was offered protective clothes and farmers were given on-the-job training on the best way to spray and use pesticides safely.



Diab Maatoq, potato lead farmer spraying his field during Bayer field day and examining the growing tubers in Dallas, Beni Suef

The project also facilitated the signing of an MOU between El-Shanawia PO and Queisna Company for Agricultural Development. The company provided inputs for a demonstration farm that supplies potatoes to PepsiCo and also offered technical assistance to potato farmers under the PO. The project trained the farmers



Field estimation of potato yield in December

on GAP for potatoes, including technical assistance and follow-up visits on harvesting and sorting. As a direct result of the project's intervention, the estimated yield reached about 14 tons/feddan this season, versus an average 6-8 tons/feddan in previous years. Potato prices this season are expected to be higher than the contracted 3,500 EGP/ton (\$218.79), which will lead to an increase in the income of potato small farmers in Beni Suef.

Activity 3.1.2: Strengthen POs' ability to collect crops and disseminate extension information

The project hosted a one-day event in cooperation with the FEC titled “Business Linkages for Green Beans.” The event brought together 38 exporters and green bean farmers from Beni Suef, Sohag, and Beheira (4 women and 34 men). The event aimed to create business linkages between POs and exporters of green beans and to support producers to meet quantity requirements, international standards, and other buyer requirements. Participating POs maintain an estimated 10,000 feddans (4,200 hectares) of green beans. During the event, the project team presented an overview of the project’s activities, event objectives, and the importance of adhering to food safety standards and measurements during cultivation, storage, and export, and good agricultural practices for green beans. Similar events are expected to take place for target value chains.



Collaboration meeting between POs green beans farmers and exporters during the business linkages event, November 17

During December, the project met with six new POs in Sohag to discuss reaching local onion farmers. A total of 37 participants, including two women, attended the meeting. These meetings were followed by one-to-one meetings with three POs with the potential to reach more smallholder farmers, with more coordination meetings to follow for collecting crops and dissemination of extension information.

Activity 3.1.3: Conduct farmer training via POs, hubs and other channels

Effective Training Strategies

On October 6-10, the project held a workshop on effective training strategies for 112 of the project’s consultants—including 16 women—in Giza. The five-day training covered training guidelines, new strategies, communication tools, and the process of designing and planning trainings (i.e., content, tools, and training plan and methods). In addition, social behavior change principles were introduced to the consultants to help enable the wide adoption of good agricultural practices which will be reflected in the expected increase in incomes of small farmers receiving USG assistance.



The Project’s consultants during the effective training strategies in Giza, October 6.

Farmer Training

The project provided farmers of tomatoes, onions, potatoes, green beans, fennel, mint, pomegranate, mangoes, grapes, and palm dates continuous trainings on GAP throughout the different growing stages of each crop in the seven governorates of Upper Egypt. The project also provided farmer field school (FFS) training for clusters of small farmers in each location and provided follow-up field visits for individual farmers to ensure implementation of practical recommendations and to respond to specific technical inquiries from farmers.



Good agriculture practices training in Beni Suef, November 10.

Improving Water Management Practices

This quarter, water management consultants introduced several low-cost solutions for pomegranate and mango farmers. The application of surface irrigation has the potential to use 50% less water, therein decreasing costs of fuel required for pumping water, as well as irrigation time. Following the project's irrigation and water management trainings, potato farmers in Minya successfully enhanced irrigation efficiency through the applied best practices, including laser land levelling, shorter planting lines, and fields divided into basins.

The project's water management consultants also introduced new low-cost technologies to increase water use efficiency for both surface and drip irrigation systems. The project signed MOUs with leading irrigation companies Techno Green and ADRTIC Egypt Company to support smallholder farmers to access new irrigation technology. The gated pipes technology is considered a low-cost solution to help smallholder farmers reduce water consumption and costs while improving crop quality and productivity. The company will fund demonstration farms on two feddans (0.84 hectares) in two governorates to assist small growers in applying and adopting the new practices.



Before improving irrigation efficiency for in surface irrigation in Minya



After improving irrigation efficiency for controlled surface irrigation – unflooded in Minya

Linkage Visit of Aswan Mango Farmers to Ismailia

On December 15-19, the project organized a linkage field visit to Ismailia governorate for 19 lead mango farmers from Aswan to learn and observe best practices in implementing GAP. The first two days included a field visit to Techno Green Company's Tabarak Farm, followed by visits to Matrab Zahran Farms and Salhiya Company for Investment and Development (a public sector company). Participants explored the mango nursery, irrigation and fertilization unit, water and fertilization station, as well as the pack house to observe sorting, washing, drying, grading, packing and cooling. Farmers learned about new mango varieties and specifications for export, proper preservation temperatures, the necessity of paying attention to farming distances between crop production rows, training and pruning of trees to control size and height and adding municipal fertilizers and chemical fertilizers. By the end of the visit, the farmers had learned about the most common errors in production and post-harvest handling. The linkage visit was an efficient tool that resulted in the implementation of most of the appropriate practices in the orchards of the lead farmers. Their orchards will be used as demo sites for the surrounding cluster of farmers.



Mostafa Ali, Aswan mango Lead farmer applied GAP upon arrival from linkage visit



Aswan mango farmers during their linkage field visit to mango farms and companies in Ismailia, December 15-19

Sub-IR 3.2: Increase access to finance for small farmers and processors

Activity 3.2.1 Increase small farmers' access to finance

During this quarter, the project conducted an internal technical review of the agricultural finance education training curriculum. After it was finalized, the project held 28 agricultural finance education workshops for 756 small farmers (324 women and 431 men).

Activity 3.2.2 Help FIs develop appropriate tools and risk-reducing models

In Q1, the project held nearly 50 on-the-job technical support field visits with eight partner financial institutions. Additionally, with the project's support in conducting market research and financial needs assessments, these institutions developed and launched eight agri-loan products to serve 61 small farmers (15 women and 46 men) with a total amount of EGPI,598,000 (\$100,000). The project also supported Ahl Balady NGO in Qena governorate by helping them test and develop a guide and plan on how to start providing financing to their members. This will enable the NGO to operate as a small-scale financial institution for the farmers in the area.

The project also organized a round table and review meeting between the partner financial institutions, USAID, eight commercial banks, the Financial Regulatory Authority (FRA), the Egyptian Microfinance Federation (EMFF), the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development, and GIZ. The meeting aimed to showcase the progress made by the financial institutions thus far and the challenges that stand in the way of providing agri-lending products to the small farmers and the strategies to disseminate these products. By the end of the meeting, three main points were recommended: a) provide a concept note to USAID to increase the funding and investment in the agri-loan portfolio of the partner financial institutions, b) start negotiations with other sources of funding and the credit lines at the MSMEDA and the participating commercial banks, and c) provide a memo by the partner financial institutions, that will be supported by EMFF and FRA, to the Central Bank of Egypt. The memo will request the facilitation of subsidized credit lines from the commercial banks and review the Loan Loss provisions, and Portfolio at Risk in agri-finance products to the financial institutions in Egypt.

IR 4: IMPROVED NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Sub-IR 4.1 Apply SBC methods to reinforce nutrition-sensitive activities

Activity 4.1.1: Conduct SBC baseline and needs assessment

This activity was completed in FY19.

Activity 4.1.2: Design SBC interventions

In Quarter 1, the project's SBC team continued to provide basic trainings on SBC concepts for 217 participants, including the project's consultants and trainers, technical assistance graduates, university graduates, and members of the Food Export Council.

From October 6-10, the SBC team conducted a training workshop on effective training methods and strategies for 102 of the project's consultants in different IRs about integrating SBC skills, concepts and theories into project activities. Moreover, the SBC team conducted technical follow-up visits for ten production and post-harvest consultants to help them improve application of those concepts. The SBC team also provided basic training on SBC for 28 university groups in Sohag and 17 technical assistance teams of graduates working with the project in Sohag. The project also trained 60 quality managers and 31 supervisors of member factories.

During Quarter 2, the SBC team will continue providing on the job technical support and follow-up for consultants, and the project's technical assistance graduates working on the project. The team will start training NGO board members and workers on SBC concepts and theories, as well as organizing events in governorates aiming at promoting successful models that have changed farmers' cultivation methods and resulted in positive outcomes.

Sub-IR 4.2: Implement nutrition-sensitive activities along agriculture-nutrition pathways

Activity 4.2.1: Promote nutrition through the food production pathway

This quarter, the project's nutrition team continued its efforts to drive home the value of nutritious, diverse and safe food, while also conducting field visits and regular follow-up with women.

The project trained 199 female beneficiaries from Upper Egypt on diet diversity and food budgeting. The attendees were introduced to the best possible methods for feeding their families a healthy diet at the lowest cost, how to identify the different food groups, and how to consume a minimum of 6 out of the 10 food groups on a daily basis. The training curriculum was also updated to incorporate new training topics such as malnutrition and the right nutrition for the first 1,000 days of life, which in return maximizes the training outputs and outcomes in line with Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) goals.

Furthermore, this quarter, 44 community nutrition educators (CNEs) received training on how to execute an effective follow up home visit to female beneficiaries to monitor implementation of the training outputs. Accordingly, the team developed a questionnaire to capture changes in diet. This quarter, CNEs visited 629 female beneficiaries with informative results that could be built upon for the upcoming training sessions and home visits.

The project's nutrition team continued to conduct the one-day awareness sessions in Upper Egypt to maximize the impact of healthy nutrition with specific focus on the ten food groups. A total of 725 beneficiaries have attended those sessions (453 women and 272 men). The team has also updated the material in light of FY19 training feedback to include new nutritional messages and the impact of the different diets on health in terms of conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

Activity 4.2.3 Promote nutrition through the women's empowerment pathway

Given the importance of food safety and its importance in line with GFSS goals and objectives to increase consumption of nutritious and safe diets, the nutrition team has developed an integrated training course that combines food safety and diet diversity to enhance small farmers' awareness regarding basic food hygiene, food poisoning prevention, food budgeting, and malnutrition diseases. A total of 177 male farmers from Upper Egypt governorates have participated in this training program this quarter.

Activity 4.2.3 Promote nutrition through the women's empowerment pathway

With the primary aim to increase the income of female beneficiaries in Upper Egypt, the nutrition team structured a "learning kitchen training program" to build the capacities of a group of female beneficiaries who participated in FY19 nutrition activities. The program will provide theoretical and practical training on how to prepare delicious cost-effective food items from the available resources and raw materials in their environment. They can implement what they learned either for home consumption or to start up their own business at home. This aligns with GFSS goals and objectives to increase consumption of nutritious and safe diets or increasing of employment and entrepreneurship activities.

In Q2, the team will conduct 14 training sessions in Upper Egypt to improve the competency level of 350 female beneficiaries.

CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

Training and Capacity Building

In FY20 Q1, the project conducted 972 trainings over 1,251 days. A summary of trainings is provided in Annex C, Participant Training Report.

Grant Procurement and Administration

During this quarter, the project received 39 requests from NGOs and private sector entities in response to the Annual Program Statement (APS) 1. The grants team replied to all requests by sending soft copies of the full APS document, the concept paper template, and answering inquiries from potential applicants.

The project held a Grants Bidders Orientation Conference in Sohag governorate on December 11, which was attended by 60 participants (49 men and 11 women) from NGOs and private sector businesses. Participants learned about the topics covered by the APS, the grants cycle, the application process, and the concept paper template. In addition, the grants team presented the grants program during the launch of the project's activities in the Delta on November 14 in Alexandria.

The project received nine concept papers in Q1, making the total received thus far 44. The project's Grants Evaluation Committee (GEC) chose eight concept papers to continue to the next phase of the grants cycle. A total of 36 concept papers were rejected because they did not meet the APS criteria, received low scores, or were incomplete.

The grants team also conducted a proposal writing workshop in Minya governorate on November 3-7 for the first six potential grantees. The workshop aimed to build their capacity to submit high-quality, results-based proposals. A total 24 participants (18 men and 6 women) representing six organizations attended. By the end of the workshop, 6 full applications were developed by the participants and almost ready to be submitted. The GEC then held a meeting on December 30 to discuss the evaluation and scoring of the six submitted proposals.

Gender

Gender Integration in Rural Communities

During this quarter, the project recruited 11 gender consultants, built the capacity of 181 associations staff members representing 15 associations on gender mainstreaming in NGOs and associations, enhanced the knowledge and skills of 973 smallholder farmers and rural women representing 25 associations on gender concepts and definitions, strengthened the capacity of 164 university graduates on gender integration in different activities, and trained 108 smallholder farmers and rural women representing 5 associations on how to start income generating activities.

Moreover, 48 association staff members received training on how to develop a gender mainstreaming plan via focused technical assistance visits, with seven associations submitting final plans. A needs assessment for the local community was carried out for 53 staff members from six associations, with the aim of designing specific interventions according to their needs. Eight gender consultants benefited from an "Effective Training Strategies" training with the aim of producing joint training material based on the target groups' needs.

Furthermore, the project succeeded in creating a momentum around gender equality concepts in a rather conservative communities, as the gender activities were mainly implemented in Upper Egypt. The area is well-known for their traditional beliefs and practices, prevailing stereotypes regarding gender roles, and lack of women representation and/or active participation in public and economic life. In order to address this, the project adopted a comprehensive approach to respond to the need of the different target groups and beneficiaries. In certain cases, specific interventions were designed for conservative communities to ensure women's engagement in the project activities.

The implemented activities had a diverse group of objectives to work on different levels, starting from gender mainstreaming for partner associations, gender integration for the university graduates working with the project, and gender definition and concepts for rural women and smallholder farmers. Likewise, the project implemented a training program that urges and provides rural women with the necessary skills to get involved in income generating activities.

The “Effective Training Strategies” Training

On October 6-10, the project organized the “Effective Training Strategies” program in Cairo for the newly contracted gender consultants. A total of eight (five women and three men) consultants worked together to discuss, develop, and produce training material for the upcoming gender trainings, along with brainstorming non-traditional training methods and techniques that might be suitable to the diverse group of target groups.

The training was also a chance for the gender consultants to become familiar with the project's overall objectives and results, discuss potential cooperation opportunities with different components of the project, address some of the challenges faced by implementing gender activities, and identifying the challenging context that the project is working in when it comes to promoting gender equality.

International Rural Women Day and launching Wa'ya initiative

On the International Day of Rural Women, the Feed the Future Egypt Rural Agribusiness Strengthening project launched the Wa'ya Initiative to identify and support outstanding rural women in Upper Egypt and initiatives to develop rural resources and support rural families there. More than 100 smallholder farmers—including 65 women—as well as representatives from USAID, the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, agricultural associations, and the project's partners participated in the October 15 event in Luxor. Seven role models from NGOs, the private sector, and other areas explained their success in breaking down barriers that keep women from reaching their full potential.



Seven role models received awards during the International Rural Women Day in Luxor, October 15

Gender in Numbers

- Seven associations developed Gender Mainstreaming Plans and adopted more inclusive and comprehensive approaches to integrate women at the institutional and program levels of their associations.
- Six traditional, conservative communities improved their views towards gender roles and stereotypes, and changed their standpoints to include women in their activities.
- Seven associations adopted women's development activities supporting rural families, to be jointly implemented in cooperation with the Wa'ya Initiative.
- 50 training, technical assistance visit, needs assessment, TOT, and visibility activities were implemented and contributed to improving the project's visibility, changing gender roles stereotypes.

Agribusiness Internship Program

In Q1, the project's Agribusiness Internship Manager met with the human resources (HR) manager of EDITA Company to discuss the qualifications needed of ATS graduates for the vacancies at EDITA Company. During October and November, new groups of university graduates were formed in the seven governorates in Upper Egypt to be enrolled in the project's life skills program including work ethics, CV writing, time management and work problem solving to qualify them to the work market needs.

Strategic planning workshop for four universities

On November 27-28, the project held a two-day workshop titled "Strategic Planning" for top university management attended by 13 representatives of the Faculties of Agriculture of the Aswan, South Valley in Qena, Sohag, and Minya Universities. The project's Chief of Party provided an overview of project objectives, activities, and expected results. Technical staff presented the concepts of strategic planning, developing goals and objectives, and how to develop a Teaching Excellence Center and a Career Development Center in their universities. Attendees worked in working groups to review their mission and vision, conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, and discussed means of integrating their activities with the project's objectives.



Working groups during the Strategic Planning Workshop, November 27-28

2. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

REGISTRATION AND CLEARANCES

In November 2019, the project received clearance to begin work in the Delta region. The project identified and secured office space for the project's third regional office in Gharbia governorate, serving seven governorates (Ismailia, Dakahlia, Gharbia, Sharkia, Monoufia, Beheira and Alexandria). The office is located in Tanta.

The project procured seven SUVs which were delivered to Egypt last quarter and are awaiting Government security clearance before they are released from Toyota storage at the Alexandria port.

PROCUREMENT

In Q1, the operations team identified service providers for a range of project needs, including continuing to identify new venues for lodging and events in all governorates in Upper Egypt and the Delta. Procurements completed or in progress during the quarter include office furniture and IT equipment for the new Tanta office, and a video production company to produce a video about potato farmers in Beni Suef. A table of government property for which payments were made during Q1 is below.

Government Property Procurement
7 SUVs – final payment made in Q1



The Project's Gharbia team during university graduate interviews in Qalyoubia governorate, December

HUMAN RESOURCES

During this quarter, the project began preparations for staffing the new Tanta office as well as several open positions in the Cairo office by posting vacancy announcements, reviewing CVs, short-listing, and conducting interviews. The project hired four employees for the Gharbia regional office to facilitate programmatic implementation of the project in the Delta region and is finalizing paperwork for more positions for the Delta region and Cairo office.

SUBCONTRACTORS

J.E. Austin Associates

In FY20 Q1, J.E. Austin Associates (JAA) supported the project's access to finance and marketing components through the contributions of its Senior Access to Finance Specialist and Marketing Lead.

- **Access to finance.** The Senior Access to Finance Specialist conducted a review of the project's Agri-Financial Education training curriculum, which the project then used in 28 Agri-Financial Education workshops with 756 small farmers (324 women and 431 men). The access to finance team hired an additional three local trainers/consultants. With support from the project, association-led financial institutions developed and launched eight agri-loan products that served

61 small farmers (46 male and 15 female) with EGP 1,598,000 in loans (EGP 1,173,000 for males and EGP 425,000 for females). The project organized a round table and review workshop between the partner financial institutions, USAID, eight commercial banks, the Financial Regulatory Authority, the Egyptian Microfinance Federation, Sawiris Foundation, and GIZ.

- **Marketing.** JAA's Marketing Lead met with 25 new companies to facilitate farm-to-market linkages between buyers and smallholder farmers through POs. JAA facilitated the signing of eight contracts in five different governorates and five different value chains and hosted a one-day event "Matchmaking for Green Beans." The event brought together 38 exporters and green bean farmers from Beni Suef, Sohag, and Behira, resulting in many of linkages and two initial contracts that were later signed between Americana and Raya Companies and Awlad Yahia Farmers Association in Sohag,

20/20 Development Company

In FY20 Q1, 20/20 DC's international marketing expert and the project began planning for project-supported actors to attend the Fruit Logistica Berlin event, taking place February 5-7, 2020. During this event, Egyptian exporting companies and POs will meet global agribusinesses from all over the world to establish potential business linkages.

CID Consulting

In FY20 Q1, CID Consulting supported the project's nutrition, gender, social and behavior change, and communications activities. Highlights include:

- **Nutrition.** The Nutrition Lead and other staff continued to conduct the one-day awareness sessions in Upper Egypt to maximize the impact of healthy nutrition with specific focus on the ten food groups. A total of 725 beneficiaries have attended these sessions (453 women and 272 men). In addition, 99 female beneficiaries from Upper Egypt were trained on diet diversity and food budgeting. CID has provided training to 44 community nutrition educators (CNEs) on how to follow up with female beneficiaries after training to monitor implementation of new concepts.
- **Gender.** The Gender Integration Lead built up the capacity of 181 associations staff members representing 15 associations on gender mainstreaming in NGOs, enhanced the knowledge and skills of 973 smallholder farmers and rural women representing 25 associations on gender concepts and definitions, strengthened the capacity of 164 university graduates on gender integration in the different activities, and trained 108 smallholder farmers and rural women representing 5 associations on how to start income generating activities. Moreover, 48 association staff received training on how to develop a Gender Mainstreaming Plan, and seven developed Gender Mainstreaming Plans.
- **Social and behavior change.** The SBC team provide trainings on SBC concept for 217 participants, including project consultants, technical assistants, university graduates, and members of the Food Export Council. The SBC team also provided basic training on SBC for 28 university groups in Sohag and 17 technical assistants working with the project in Sohag. The SBC team also trained 60 quality managers and supervisors of factories' members in the Food Export Council from 31 factories.
- **Communications.** The Communications Coordinator worked with the Communications Lead to finalize all designs for the nutrition and gender promotional materials in compliance with USAID/DOC branding guidance, and wrote and submitted reports for field visits.

3. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In Q1, the project met all deliverable requirements and completed key technical activities described in the FY20 Work Plan. The project continued expanding its training, outreach, and event activities. The project also established relationships with new companies who are interested in developing sustainable business linkages with POs, and signed MOUs with POs, financial institutions, and facilitated the signing of contracts between POs and buyers and input suppliers. The project also opened an office and started activities in the Delta region. Initial activities in the Delta included engagement with stakeholders and potential partners including buyers, universities, and government representatives in that region. Baseline data collection took place in the seven governorates of Upper Egypt, and the project continued using its MEL database to collect key data on project participants. The MEL team and staff from Abt Associates' home office worked to develop an expanded MEL database with increased functionality.

CHALLENGES

Delta Region. The USG stop work order for the Delta was lifted in September; however, national security clearance for the project to begin activities in the Delta was not granted until November 2019, which delayed the project's ability to begin key activities in the seven new governorates. However, the project identified and secured office space in Gharbia governorate and began the processes of procuring office furniture, IT equipment, and hiring Gharbia staff members.

Agriculture Internship Program. The project's collaboration with agriculture technical schools and their students requires approval from Egypt's Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MOETE). A delay in signing an MOU with the MOETE due to security approvals hindered the project's work with the students in the schools. To mitigate the impact of this delay, the project has been working with recent graduates of ATSs until security approvals and the MOU are finalized.

Gender. There are many illiterate participants in the project's activities—especially women—who are unable to benefit from the written materials, exercises, and training resources the project offers. Moving forward, the project will identify other training approaches that are more inclusive of the range skills and education of Egypt's horticulture sector actors.

LESSONS LEARNED AND PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

Social and Behavior Change (SBC). The project's SBC team identified an opportunity to incorporate SBC approaches in trainings for laborers in factories, particularly related to changing behavior related to hygiene and other safety measures and requirements. Current practices negatively affect the quality of production and thus export potential. Moving forward, the project will develop a plan to study the strongest barriers the project faces in changing behaviors and identify solutions.

Gender. The project has found that decision-makers within POs and associations must be included in capacity building activities—especially those linked to gender integration—to ensure uptake and prioritization by the organization. The project is considering assigning female coordinators to associations that more resistant to gender integration to facilitate cooperation. In addition, the project

may support associations operating in conservative communities to conduct exchange visits with other organizations in similar environments that have been successful in integrating women into their activities.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

BRANDING

In YIQI, the communications team—in collaboration with the Gender Integration Lead—produced communications material (including Wa'ya logo, invitation, t-shirts, caps, roll-ups, pop-ups, trophies, and name tags) for a one-day workshop in celebration of the International Rural Women Day and launching of the project's Wa'ya Initiative) in Luxor. The team worked in collaboration with the project's technical team and USAID/Egypt's Development Outreach and Communications (DOC) office for approvals.



Communications products for International Women's Day Luxor,, October 15

During Q4, the communications team produced food groups' folder, food safety brochure, posters, kitchen aprons, nutrition messages, food groups' brochure, sticky board for the nutrition component.

Nutrition
communications material



REPORTING/PHOTOS

The project's Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinators in Minya and Luxor worked closely with the communications team to capture training and field visit data each week that feeds into the weekly highlights. The communications team submitted weekly highlights (12) to the Projects COR, and field visit reports (3). The team developed YIQI and updating the photo archive for events to ensure validity and credibility of information.

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Activity Coverage on USAID/Egypt's Facebook

USAID Facebook: shorturl.at/bouzl

US Embassy Website: <https://bit.ly/2LPutQ6>

US Embassy Facebook: <https://bit.ly/2LQNMsd>

USAID Website: <https://bit.ly/38B1aKY>

USAID Facebook – Succes Story: shorturl.at/bouzl

USAID Facebook- Succes Story shorturl.at/gnsN5

The delegation visited the El Hebeil Wastewater Treatment facility to hear from Mamdouh Raslan, Chairman of the Holding Company for Water and Wastewater, about how the USAID-funded expansion of the facility will meet the needs of the governorate's growing population, while using energy-efficient technologies to keep the cost of operation and maintenance minimal.

At a primary health clinic, the delegation met with Egyptian staff to learn how they are conducting seminars on maternal and child health and nutrition and improving outreach for health services and healthy behaviors, areas in which USAID closely coordinates with the Ministry of Health to provide technical assistance.

The delegation visited with Egyptian farmers to see how USAID is supporting them in meeting global agricultural best practices to garner higher incomes, and heard from Agriculture Technical School graduates and current students about how USAID-sponsored training and career counseling helped them get jobs on commercial farms or start their own businesses.



At left, the US Embassy's press release and at right, US Embassy's Facebook post of the Deputy Assistant Administrator and USAID field visit in



USAID/Egypt
Facebook post
of a project
success story,
December 29

At right,
USAID's
Facebook post
on a project
success story of
a smallholder
farmer,
December 19



Table 2. Media Coverage

Wa'ay Initiative	Delta Launch Event
Al-Ahram Gate: https://bit.ly/3InPoys	Ahram Gate https://bit.ly/2FCaNwt
Khabar Masr: https://bit.ly/35Fztix	Almasry Alyoum
Akhbarel Yom https://bit.ly/2MVdXxA	https://bit.ly/2uCzjY9
Shorouknews: https://bit.ly/2MpBh7U	https://bit.ly/2JFvHDN
ElBawaba News: https://bit.ly/31r0BON	Gomhuria Online https://bit.ly/2OslEWI
El-Youm: shorturl.at/evK48	Youm7 https://bit.ly/2FvgLxM
Project Events	MOU between the Project and the Food Export Council
Business Linkage for Green Beans: https://bit.ly/33c4FU6	Gomhuria: https://bit.ly/33jwMKz
Certification Training Program: https://bit.ly/35p6uOY	Youm7: https://bit.ly/2P7kGG2
Business Linkage for Green Beans (Shorouk News): https://bit.ly/2OvmQPq	Khabar Masr: https://bit.ly/2YaVWJ4j
	FEC Facebook: https://bit.ly/34MMRR3
Food Africa	Stakeholder Meeting in Gharbia
Ahram Online: https://bit.ly/2Eoc7Br	Ahram Online: shorturl.at/ahlt2
Ministry of Trade Facebook: https://bit.ly/2srtlv8	AkbarElyom: shorturl.at/bkAN0
	Shorouk News: shorturl.at/sCHIY
	Dostor: shorturl.at/qyOY8
	Youm 7: shorturl.at/fvDEN
	Elwatan news: shorturl.at/pBIKM

ANNEX A. PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TRACKING TABLE

#	Indicator	Disaggregation	Baseline	FY20 Results					FY19 Results	Cumulative Results	FY20 Target
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total			
EG.3.2	Number of individuals participating in USG food security programs	Sex, Age Category, Type of Individual, Size of Producer	0	4,934				4,934	15,625		30,000
EG.3.1-2	Hectares under new or improved irrigation as a result of USG assistance*	N/A	0	N/A				N/A	N/A	N/A	5,500
EG.3-9	Number of full-time equivalent jobs created with USG assistance	Location, Duration, Sex of the job-holder	0	569				569	23	592	3,000
CUSTOM	Value of private sector contributions to project partnerships	N/A	\$0	\$17,507				\$17,507	\$216	\$17,723	\$2.5M
CUSTOM	Number of farmers whose incomes have doubled as a result of USG assistance**	Sex, Age Category	0	N/A				N/A	N/A	N/A	6,250
CUSTOM	Number of contracts between smallholder farmers and market channel	Value Chain, Type of PO, Contract Status	0	8				8	9	17	25
EG.3.2-26	Value of annual sales of farms and firms receiving USG assistance	Type of product or service, Type of producer/ firm, Sex of producer or proprietor, Age	\$0	\$1,584,337				\$1,584,337	\$245,000	\$1,829,337	\$6,250,000
EG.3.1-14	Value of new USG commitments and private sector investment leveraged by the USG to support food security and nutrition	Funding Source	\$0	\$297,228				\$297,228	\$216	\$297,444	\$4,250,000
EG .3.1-c	Value of targeted agricultural commodities exported at a national level	Commodity	\$0	\$1,483,494				\$1,483,494	\$0	\$1,483,494	\$3,750,000
EG.3.2-7	Number of technologies, practices, and approaches under various phases of research, development, and	Category of Research, Phase of Development	0	2				0	0	0	5

#	Indicator	Disaggregation	Baseline	FY20 Results					FY19 Results	Cumulative Results	FY20 Target
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total			
	uptake as a result of USG assistance*										
EG.3.2-27	Value of agriculture-related financing accessed as a result of USG assistance	Type of financing accessed, Size of recipient, Sex of producer or proprietor, Age	\$0	\$123,916				\$123,916	\$42,526	\$166,442	\$250,000
EG.3-10	Yield of targeted agricultural commodities among program participants with USG assistance*	Crop: Potato	TBD	4.11 MT/ha				4.11 MT/ha	N/A	4.11 MT/ha	
		Crop: Onion	TBD	2.51 MT/ha				2.51 MT/ha	N/A	2.51 MT/ha	
EG.3.2-24	Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices or technologies with USG assistance*	Value chain actor type, Sex, Age, Management practice or technology type, Commodity	0	TBD				TBD	N/A	N/A	3,000
EG.3.2-25	Number of hectares under improved management practices or technologies with USG assistance*	Type of Hectare, Sex, Age, Management practice or technology type, Commodity	0	N/A				N/A		N/A	5,500
HL.9-4	Number of individuals receiving nutrition-related professional training through USG-supported programs	Sex, Training Type	0	293				293	885	1178	2,850
EG.3.3-10	Percentage of female direct beneficiaries of USG nutrition-sensitive agriculture activities consuming a diet of minimum diversity**	Age	TBD	N/A				N/A	N/A	N/A	25% over baseline
GNDR-2	Percentage of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources	N/A	0	19.63%				19.63%	19%	19.63%	50%
YOUTH-3	Percentage of participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources who are youth (15-29)	N/A	0	29.69%				29.69%	27%	29.69%	40%